



## TRAILER HITCH COVER ASSEMBLY

### CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION(S)

The present invention claims the priority date of copending United States Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/399,285, filed July 29, 2002.

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

#### 1. Field of the Invention

[0001] The present invention relates generally to motor vehicles and, more particularly, to a trailer hitch cover assembly for a motor vehicle.

#### 2. Description of the Related Art

[0002] It is known that motor vehicles may be provided with a trailer hitch to pull a trailer. Typically, the motor vehicle has a trailer hitch having a hitch tube secured to the motor vehicle beneath the bumper and a ball connector having an insert tube disposed in the hitch tube. A locking pin extends through the tubes to secure the insert tube to the hitch tube. The trailer generally includes a tongue beam, which is releasibly attached to the ball connector as is known in the art.

[0003] Of concern in the use of the trailer hitch is the strength and cleanliness of the hitch tube. Typically, the trailer hitch, whether it is a ball or other type of attachment, has the insert tube and ball connector removed from the hitch tube and stored separately. This protects the ball connector and insert tube from corrosion and exposure to the atmosphere but leaves the hitch tube open to the same. The hitch tube, although constructed of metal and painted, being constantly exposed to the elements, will typically rust not only externally, but also within the interior of the hitch tube. Additionally, the hitch tube has a tendency to

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